



Hort Headlines

March 26, 2010

- **Potential Drought Could Threaten Northwest Crops** – The United States drought monitor shows the entire state of Idaho and most of Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, and Utah have been unusually dry this year. Due to a weak El Nino many of the storms with significant precipitation have missed the Northwestern states accounting for the current dry spell. Officials said this sort of dry pattern in the Northwest is not unusual for an El Nino winter. Farmers in the northwest depend on snowpack to keep and maintain their reservoirs and the lack of snowpack this year has farmers and growers worried about their crops.
- **Form I-9 / Responding To An Audit Training** – Dan Fazio, Farm Bureau Employer Services Director will be conducting training on Thursday, April 8 from 1:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m in Bay Center, WA. In this training, you will learn: how to properly complete and retain the form I-9; receive a handbook with detailed instructions for completing and retaining the form; learn how to avoid discrimination in recruitment, hiring, employment eligibility verification, or dismissal of persons authorized to work in the United States; have all your questions answered; and learn the appropriate response to an audit of your I-9s. Cost for the training is \$50 per/person, includes materials & refreshments. This training is available only to Washington Farm Bureau Members. Please contact Kim Bresler at kbresler@wsfb.com or (360) 528-2916 with any questions.
- **Helpful Technology On Horizon For Agriculture** – A joint effort between Washington State University's extensive weather monitoring network and a Yakima software development firm 4Quarters is putting critical weather and disease data information at the

fingertips of farmers and growers on their cell phone. The system will deliver weather and crop disease data to mobile devices equipped with a Web browser. The system is known as AgAlertz and is currently being tested at no charge. To date, 95 farmers have signed up for the alerts. Farmers can get the information while out in their fields or orchards. Officials say the new system is another example of employing technology that will assist farmers produce healthy crops, something the industry has been seeking for years. Learn more at weather.wsu.edu.

- **Forgotten Fruits Initiative Announced** – The "Forgotten Fruits" initiative was recently announced by the Renewing America's Food Traditions (RAFT) alliance. The project will focus on apples earmarking at least 90 endangered apple varieties in each region for recovery to our orchards and farms, so they can again be enjoyed in restaurants, cideries and kitchens. RAFT also mentioned that 2010 will be known as the "Year of the Heirloom Apple" in an effort to engage food communities in the restoration of apple varieties and culinary traditions specific to their regions. For more information download the brochure at www.slowfoodusa.org.
- **Possible Legislation On The Horizon For LBAM** – Recently, State Sen. Dean Florez of the Senate Agriculture Committee said he will likely introduce legislation in an effort to restrict how the state addresses the light brown apple moth. Florez, D-Shafter, conducted a March 23 hearing to collect testimony on the California Department Food and Agriculture's environmental impact report on its program for controlling the pest. The state shifted its goal from eradicating the moth to simply controlling it since the report was completed. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service recently denied petitions to remove LBAM from its list of quarantine pests. The state has also given up aerial spraying, which many coast-area residents say has caused serious impacts to human health.
- **Sharing Yakima's Heart With Haiti** – You are invited to join a local Yakima effort titled "A Million Apples For Haiti". Proceeds from this fund raiser will support the international organization, Hope for the Hungry, and their efforts to rebuild Haiti, one home at a time. Hope for the Hungry, an organization that has been assisting Haitians for 27 years, is currently raising funds to rebuild homes that were devastated during the January 12th 7.0 earthquake in Haiti. For more information [download the flyer](#).
- **Special GRAS2P Sign Up Night** – Learn more about GRAS2P and Audit Readiness on Wednesday, April 7th from 5:30—7:30 p.m. at the Washington Apple Commission. Dinner will be provided. Please RSVP to Nicole Brunner at Nicole@wahort.org or call 509-665-9641 x302. Don't miss this opportunity to sign up for GRAS2P. Limited to the first 150 people.
- **WSHA Membership E-Billing** – WSHA has upgraded our membership billing system and we are now setup to e-bill. What is e-billing? E-billing will allow you to pay your membership dues online. If you would like to pay your membership online and get setup with our new e-billing system please email Nicole@wahort.org with your email address and we will update your information. This is also a great way to make sure we have the

current email in place for you. We thank you for your previous investment and encourage you to renew your WSHA membership in June.

- **Find Out How Cold It Will Be In Your Area** – Clearwest frost forecasts for the Yakima Valley/Central Basin district will begin Wednesday, March 10th and continue through May. The daily forecasts for the Wenatchee/Okanogan District will begin on Monday, March 22 and continue through May. Forecasts can be accessed at www.clearwest.com. Beginning on March 10th forecasts can be heard by calling the toll-free telephone number: 1-888-982-1501.
- **Get Geared Up For Golf** – Time to start planning for the 17th Annual WSHA Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament that will take place Tuesday, August 3 at the Lake Chelan Municipal Golf Course. This year's event is sure to be another big success with tree fruit industry golfers playing to benefit student scholarships. Put your company name in the spotlight by becoming a tournament sponsor by emailing lynette@wahort.org to learn more.

Headline Links

Farm Bureau: Stop H-2A changes – The American Farm Bureau Federation is waiting for a U.S. District Court to consider its request to put Obama administration changes to the H-2A foreign guestworker program on hold. Learn more on this story from [The Capital Press](#).

States Weigh In On EPA's No-Spray Buffers – Northwest state agriculture directors are calling for the Environmental Protection Agency to revise its methods for establishing no-spray buffers for Western state waterways. Learn more on this story from [The Hermiston Herald](#).

Governor Signs Off On New Legislation –As Washington lawmakers continued to hammer out their differences over balancing the budget, legislation affecting agricultural producers, timberland owners and rural areas were signed into law by Gov. Chris Gregoire. Learn more on this story from [The Capital Press](#).

Containers Fast-Track Ag To Chicago – Produce shippers recently got their first look at a speedier rail service that will take their cargo from Quincy, Wash., to the Chicago area. Learn more on this story from [The Capital Press](#).

More Africanized Bees Found In Southern Utah – Homeowners, farmers and ranchers are urged to learn more about how to deal with Africanized bees without jeopardizing their European cousins. Honey bees that pollinate fruit, vegetables and crops remain an important part of Utah's \$1.5 billion agriculture economy, according to state officials. Learn more on this story from [The Capital Press](#).



Week" - Certified First Aiders list – Confirm you have at least 1 person on board with a current First Aid card. Post their name (& picture too!) on your bulletin board or near your emergency contact information and/or above the first aid kit. A template for the Certified First Aiders list is in the GRAS2P Guidance Manual (Yellow Forms Tab; page 29 of 61). This is part of USDA GAP (G-14) and Global G.A.P. (AF3.2.4 and AF3.3.4).

GRAS2P Web-Site – [*web-site*](#).

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